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"Arsenic in Paints and Wallpapers," "Is That Transfusion Necessary?" "You're Not as Well Fed as You Think," "A Milestone," and "Let Food Be Your Medicine" by Doris Grant, plus Tip of the Month (Oily Skin) and High Points of Trace Minerals-B12

The following is a transcription of the November/December 1959 issue of Dr. Royal Lee's *Applied Trophology* newsletter, originally published by Standard Process Laboratories.

Arsenic in Paints and Wallpapers

Arsenical wallpapers are another unsuspected cause of illness and depression, and their dangerous character is unknown to many and is disbelieved in by many members of the medical profession. A year or two ago, I myself belonged to this number. I received a circular urging united action to prevent the sale of arsenical wallpapers without the purchaser being informed that they contained arsenic. This I threw at once into the wastepaper basket, thinking that the danger alluded to in it was chimerical, inasmuch as I had prescribed arsenic medicinally to others with good results and had taken it myself without any injury—the quantities employed in both cases being, as I thought, very much larger than were likely to come from a wallpaper.

A month or two later, I learned, by sad experience, how mistaken I had been. Having chosen an olive-green wallpaper, I asked the vender whether it was free from arsenic or not; being solemnly assured that it was, I had it put up. In a very short time indeed after it was hung, I began to suffer from dysenteric symptoms, with intense languor and weakness—symptoms that strongly indicated arsenical poisoning.

Again, I went to the shop where I had bought the paper and repeated my question whether the paper was free from arsenic or not. "Oh, yes, sir," was my reply. "There is no arsenic in any paper that we sell." The symptoms, however, were so clearly those of poisoning that I submitted a piece of the paper to a professional analyst, and he at once sent back the report: "The paper is loaded with arsenic."

Although it was a good while before I recovered from the effects of this, I was much more fortunate than a medical friend, whose wife and himself were both nearly killed by the use of arsenical paint, or another medical man, whose children died of symptoms of which he was led, only after their death, to associate with the arsenic with which the nursery wallpaper was loaded. Whenever the symptoms of weakness, weariness, and depression disappear on leaving home and are again felt very shortly after returning, the sufferer should at once have the wallpapers examined.

—T. Lauder Brunton, MD, DSc, FRS, *The Influence of Stimulants and Narcotics on Health (The Book of Health)*, Cassell & Company, London, 1885.

Is That Transfusion Necessary?

This question is being asked more and more since it was reported that probably 50 percent of all blood transfusions given today are unnecessary.

Dr. Bruce Chown, University of Manitoba at Winnipeg, states, "Blood has always had a mystical quality; its use in the operating room is often more mystical than scientific." He also infers that transfusions carry a "hidden threat" of death to the offspring when given to a woman of childbearing age.

Cases are on record of babies being born up to five years after a routine transfusion with fatal erythroblastosis.

This is a blood condition in which the cells are not fully matured due to the fact that an entirely unrelated blood group system was present in the mother. Quite often Rh factors are erroneously blamed for this condition.

Again quoting Dr. Chown, "The most careful selection of the donor blood under our present methods of selection would not have prevented the sensitization of the mother and the sequent death of the baby."

It would appear that a very small percentage of transfusions given women of childbearing age in relation to pregnancy could be termed lifesaving.

—Excerpts from "Transfusions Carry Threat," *Canadian Medical Association Journal*, December 11, 1957.

You're Not as Well Fed as You Think

Certain specialists in the practice of medicine who handle one small segment of the body often see the perversions of malnutrition before those general "doctors" who handle the body as a whole. The dentists are perhaps outstanding examples of keen observers of mucosal disease. For generations society has been requesting of dentists that they find and eliminate the cause for decayed teeth. For many years these dentists have been doing vast amounts of research concerning dental caries and causes for loss of teeth. Some estimate that nearly 100 percent of the problem resolves itself into one of malnutrition in different forms.

The outstanding dental college at the University of California has been conducting a research problem extending over a period of ten years. Among other things a survey was made to determine the amount of dental caries in the state of California. It was found that if every dentist in the state spent all of his time doing nothing but filling teeth, eight hours a day, seven days a week, 365 days of the year, it would take four years for these dentists to restore all the teeth that need restoring in California today. This would not include the caries that would accumulate during the four years, so at the end of this four-year period there would actually be more dental caries present than there is now. In other words, the dentists are going further and further behind in their attempt to salvage the teeth of the people in America.

—*Modern Nutrition*, Los Angeles, California.

A Milestone

The *Literary Digest*, February 4, 1933, contained a story about the results obtained on decayed and strong teeth by Dr. and Mrs. Gordon Agnew, missionary dentists stationed for ten years at the West China Union University. Their observations and experiments were on 350 native Chinese and Tibetans, both children and adults. About 3,000 diets of these natives were analyzed and tested to find the right food combinations. The tests determined that the native foods, because of their large content of organic phosphorus—lecithin—and vitamin D, not only prevented decay in the teeth but arrested decay that had already started. Their experiments were later continued at the University of Toronto with further, definite success. Dr. E.V. McCollum, of Johns Hopkins University, called this work by the Agnews a "milestone in scientific progress."

Let Food Be Your Medicine

By Doris Grant

Voltaire wrote: "We put medicine about which we know little, into bodies about which we know less, to cure diseases about which we know nothing at all." This remark is more apt today than at the time it was written. Never in the history of medicine have there been so many drugs for the physician to prescribe, and never has there been such an increase in the degenerative diseases.

In the many recent articles and letters appearing in medical journals, it is only too evident that physicians are becoming concerned at the greatly increased—and often indiscriminate—use of drugs at the present time. In the *Lancet* of December 1, 1956, an editorial headlined "Cautionary Cards" sounded a warning that the remedies in use today are so powerful that they can result in death if knowledge is not available concerning the patient's previous treatment with drugs and serums. It would seem that the interaction of drugs with one another is fraught with danger, even when months or years separate their administration.

The editorial suggested that the only way to minimize this danger would be for everyone to go through life labeled with details of all drugs and injections received from birth upwards! Pity the poor babies today who have so many needles stuck into them that they have become veritable pincushions! In the *Practitioner* of January 1956, an article warned against the indiscriminate use of antibiotics, especially for minor infections: "They deprive the

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patient of that immunity from subsequent infection which he would have acquired if the infection had been allowed to run its course."

From these articles and many others that have been published, it is obvious that physicians are becoming more and more concerned not only with the increased use of drugs but also with their frequently unpredictable and harmful side effects. Today, however, the average layman thinks that he has not had "his money's worth" from the Health Service (NHS) unless he has been given penicillin, pills, a bottle of medicine, or injections of some sort. There is undoubtedly a strong case for "placebo" pills as suggested by Dr. Atkinson in the *British Medical Journal* of June 21, 1958. A chemist friend told the writer that he now sells 20,000 phenobarbitone (½ grain) tablets, whereas seven years ago he sold 500, and that it is unbelievable how people "stuff themselves" with patent medicines.

In spite of the fantastic consumption of medicine—which costs the NHS 87,000,000 pounds a year—more and more thinking people today are questioning the effectiveness of modern drugs and medicines, *especially in regard to the degenerative diseases*, and are refusing to be treated with them. Instead, they are turning to a sound diet of properly constituted foods as the only remedy and are successfully proving the truth of Hippocrates's own advice, "Let food be your medicine and medicine be your food."

As a result of books and articles published, the writer has received hundreds of letters from chronic sufferers in all walks of life who are now looking to food as the only hope and who frankly admit having lost faith in drugs. The following extracts from a few of these letters are a fair sample of this disillusionment:

> "It is now over a year ago since I adopted a sound diet and stopped the drugs that various specialists of Harley Street and Yorkshire advised me to take for the rest of my life, which according to them was of short duration. I have been very near to death and indeed quite prepared to die, but thanks to the sound diet that I adopted, I am now a very fit person and doing all in my power to spread the knowledge of this diet and its relation to health."
>
> "For the past year, I have endured great pain and tried all kinds of treatments without much relief!"
>
> "I have had all kinds of treatments from hospitals and doctors but all of no avail."
>
> "My doctor is frankly puzzled and just gives me aspirin tablets to relieve the pain. I am convinced that the food we eat encourages or discourages this complaint."
>
> "I have had all the usual hospital treatment, which only alleviates the pain with pills but doesn't cure."
>
> "I have only been given tablets to relieve the pain. Have tried in vain to get information about what I should eat from my doctor and from two specialists at two hospitals."
>
> "One of my doctors said that I have too much acid in my body but made no comment on how to counteract it by eating or not eating this food or that. Consequently, I am still suffering great pain."
>
> "I have no time for doctors' medicine or drugs."

To have helped many similar, seemingly chronic cases back to health through improved nutrition has been the most rewarding experience the writer has ever known.

Nevertheless, the triumphs of modern medicine are many and some of them magnificent; that goes without saying. But as Dr. Frangcon Roberts stated in an article in the *Sunday Times* of April 12, 1953, these are confined to the acute diseases, and he frankly admits (as do most physicians) that where the chronic and degenerative diseases are concerned, cure is impossible. It is for these chronic and degenerative diseases in particular that food can play such an important role.

Until a few years ago, anyone who stressed the connection between food and health was regarded as a long-haired crank. Today, however, all progressive members of the medical profession are urging a reappraisal of our concept of nutrition, and much research work is being done. Irrefutable evidence is being accumulated that properly constituted food is a prerequisite of health—that even a *partial* deficiency of one or more of the accessory substances is associated with much subnormal health and development and with incidence of disease.

Evidence

Recognition of the intimate relationship of food to health was recorded by the father of medicine himself. Since then, many other physicians have made valuable contributions to this evidence.

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During the Hungarian Campaign of 1750, Chief Surgeon Kramer of the Austrian army was confronted with an appalling outbreak of scurvy. He cured his soldiers by giving them fresh orange, lemon, or lime juice and wrote in his report to headquarters, "Scurvy is the most loathsome disease in nature, *for which no cure is to be found in your medicine chest*." This incident was recorded in the book *Sun Diet* by Dr. Sanderson-Wells, the pioneer doctor-nutritionist who founded the Sanderson-Wells Lectures at the Middlesex Hospital.

About the middle of the eighteenth century, Captain Cook made the same discovery regarding the antiscorbutic powers of fresh oranges and lemons. As a result, in 1795, the Admiralty issued a daily portion of lime juice to protect the sailors from scurvy. The effect was dramatic. In the Royal Naval Hospital at Haslar in 1806 there was only one case of scurvy, whereas in 1760 there had been 1754 cases.

At the end of last century, Dr. Eijkmann, principal medical officer of a big prison in Java, had a large number of cases of paralysis among his prisoners. Going home one day, he noticed that his poultry also had paralysis and found that both poultry and prisoners were being fed on polished white rice. He at once ordered brown, unpolished rice for his poultry with immediate improvement. He did likewise for his sick prisoners and in a relatively short time the hospital was clear. These men had been suffering from beriberi.

In the early years of this century, Gowland Hopkins made his dramatic discovery of the vitamins, which helped to hasten the birth of "the newer knowledge of nutrition."

In 1913 Sir Robert McCarrison began his outstanding and epoch-making work on nutrition in India. By feeding experimental rats with the actual diets of various Indian races, he found that they evidenced all the deficiency diseases peculiar to these races. He also fed rats on a highly vitamin-deficient diet such is commonly used by the poorer classes in England and found that it gave rise to two chief types of ailments— pulmonary and gastrointestinal.

It is significant that when Dr. McCarrison fed his rats on perfectly constituted diets in common use by people among whom peptic ulcer is rare, they remained free from it and in excellent health. It is also significant that the concurrent agricultural research work in India of another famous pioneer, Sir Albert Howard, corroborated this fact—that properly fed animals do not contract disease. His properly fed cows could rub noses with foot-and-mouth infected animals and remain immune.

Sir Robert McCarrison's findings were also confirmed by the large-scale experiments on vitamin B1 deficiency by the late Sir Jack Drummond and his colleagues. In his Harben Lectures for 1935, Sir Jack said, "McCarrison is unquestionably right in insisting that vitamin deficiency…is directly or indirectly responsible for a very large proportion of ill health today."

In 1939, 600 doctors of the County of Cheshire published their "Testament," which has since become famous. In it they maintained, "Our daily work brings us repeatedly to the same point: this illness results from a lifetime of wrong nutrition." They also maintained that the first of the two objects of the National Health Insurance Act had not been attempted: the *prevention* of sickness.

This document recently inspired another "Testament"—a public declaration of the medical and dental members of the Council of the Soil Association—and was signed by more than 400 physicians and dentists. It was published in *The Lancet* of January 1957. No such document had ever before been published in a medical journal, and its impact was greatly strengthened by a sympathetic editorial. This declaration stresses the concept of organic wholeness and the vital relationships between soil, plant, animal, and man, and expresses deep concern about the chemical and mechanical treatment of food from the soil to the table, "flour being an outstanding example."

In the early part of this century, Professor (later Sir) Edward Mellanby made his pioneer investigations on the part played by diet in the causation of disease, particularly in the relation of vitamin D deficiency to rickets. The result of his famous experiments on dogs eventually led to the banning of agene in bread in 1956.

Valuable contributions to food knowledge have been made in many different countries, but particularly so in America—at the Mayo Clinic, and the Rockefeller Institute, the Lee Foundation for Nutritional Research, and by many eminent medical researchers. *Nutrition and Physical Degeneration*, a book by one of these researchers, Dr. Weston Price, is a classic of its kind. Any government legislator reading this book would at once set about outlawing sophistication of food and fluoridation of drinking water. In fact, anyone connected with public health in any form should read this book.

In this country, at the present time, outstanding research on nutrition is being done by Dr. Hugh Sinclair of Oxford University, especially in the relationship of essential fatty acid deficiency to diseases of the heart and arteries. He is our foremost medical authority on nutrition in this country today, and his pronouncements should be heeded. In his World Health Day Speech, published in the *British Medical Journal* of December 14, 1957, he says: "The new

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It is now an accepted fact that food is the foundation of health—*we are what we eat*. Various publications of the World Health Organization and the League of Nations have borne witness to it. At Hot Springs, Virginia, in 1943, the United Nations Conference on Food and Agriculture set its seal upon it. In 1935 a leading article in the *British Medical Journal* said: "There can be no doubt but that this newer knowledge of nutrition has placed in the hands of our profession a potent weapon against disease, a potent instrument in the promotion of physical efficiency and well-being. It behooves us, therefore, to become proficient in this knowledge, to apply it in the daily course of our work, and to spread it by every means in our power."

Education

It is now more than twenty years since the *BMJ* recommended that the medical profession "should become proficient in this knowledge," *and it is still not being adequately taught in medical schools today.* In a League of Nations report, *Nutrition and Public Health* (1935), it says: "At present, medical students during the early years of their course are given a few lectures and demonstrations dealing with the physiology of nutrition, and perhaps carry out a little laboratory work in this field; the subject is presented as a chapter of physiology and not as an integral part of preventative medicine."

Reading this, medical students will understandably quail at the mere suggestion of yet another specialty being added to an already too full curriculum, but as Sir Robert McCarrison points out in his Cantor Lectures (published by Faber and Faber as *Nutrition and National Health*, a book that should be in every medical school library):

> "Surely a subject that is 'an integral part of preventive medicine' must in the future be given a place in the medical curriculum commensurate with its importance. In its teaching we must be content with no half measures. The student must have the opportunity to see with his own eyes the havoc that is wrought in the various organs and tissues of animals subjected to faulty nutrition of various kinds and degrees."

And so, until the new knowledge of nutrition is included in medical training, medical practice will continue to be "symptomatic"—to treat the *symptom* instead of the underlying *cause* and *the part* instead of *the whole.* "We overlook the fact that any measure of treatment that controls or subdues the symptoms of disease without eliminating the underlying causes cannot restore health," says Dr. Warmbrand in *Add Years to Your Heart.*

The cause of most disease, as the 600 Cheshire doctors clearly defined it, is *wrong nutrition.* That food, however, can be the best medicine may be far too simple a remedy for our complicated twentieth-century minds to grasp. To have a blind faith in medicines as the answer to disease is so much easier than to make any personal effort.

It is a common failing to shirk responsibility where our health is concerned. Prejudice, habit, and apathy will have to be overcome, having come to regard as normal our subnormal states of health. Although many physicians today are nutritionally minded, it may take the medical profession as a whole a very long time to come round to the possibility of dietary factors being concerned in disease. We have a saying in Scotland: "There's nane so blin' as them that winna see."

There may also be a subconscious fear of having to practice what is preached, and the injunction "physician, heal thyself" will take on a new significance. In the meantime, the Health Service pattern will have to be changed. Doctors need higher pay and must have fewer patients in order to practice good medicine from the physiological approach, and this should be made possible by a lowered drug bill.

The establishment of a Foundation of Research in Human Nutrition is now an urgency. Only when all the facts have been established by more research can the newer knowledge of nutrition be put into practice and included as a major subject in the medical curriculum. In this connection Sir Robert McCarrison maintains that this will do for medicine what asepsis has done for surgery, particularly in regard to preventive medicine.

It is encouraging to know that plans have already been suggested for establishing just such a foundation near Oxford University. Anyone who is interested in assisting this fundamental and greatly needed research in human nutrition should communicate with Dr. Sinclair, fellow of Magdalen College, who will be pleased to supply further information.

Judging from the constant requests received by the writer for names of physicians who prescribe food instead of drugs, it is not difficult to predict a great future for all nutritionally minded students and to see that they would provide a lasting and most important contribution to the relief of much unnecessary suffering and to the welfare of mankind.

—Reprinted from *Cambridge University Medical Society Magazine*, Vol. XXXVI, No. 1, Michaelmas 1959.

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